



Session update from Olympia

November 20, 2011



Thankful to Serve You!

During this special time of year I am, as I'm sure you are, cherishing my family and friends and reflecting on what's truly important. It is a privilege to be in the Senate and to serve as your Senator. I had the opportunity recently to shoot a video that highlights the 3rd District and captures a bit of the essence on why it is such an honor to represent you and Spokane. Click [here](#) to take a video tour of the 3rd Legislative District with me!

Senator Brown Around Town



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Pictured Above: Sheila Geraghty, Senator Lisa Brown and Captain Kyle Smith at the Salvation Army's Sally's House

Once again the last few weeks have been a busy time meeting with constituents and attending legislative forums prior to the start of the November 28 special session. Recent highlights of meetings include: meeting with the Director of the Spokane Library and board members, discussing critical housing issues with partners of the Spokane Low Income Housing Coalition, meeting with staff of the Empire Health Foundation, discussing public health with Spokane Regional Health District's Chief Medical Officer Dr. Joel McCullough and members of his team, and participating in a legislative reception at The Arc of Spokane.

Finally, I toured the Salvation Army's Sally's House which is an emergency foster shelter where kids are taken when the law must intervene and children are removed from a dangerous home. It is a partnership with the Department of Children and Family services and was created so children would immediately have a place to stay until the best fit home was found. Sally's House is just one of the many local "safety net" services that are on the list of alternatives to have their funding cut. I felt it was important to visit the facility and see firsthand the important work they do before returning to Olympia.

News Surrounding the State Budget

Friday, Sen. Ed Murray the chair of the budget-writing Senate Ways & Means Committee and I issued the following statement regarding the revenue forecast:

To families who are sending their children into more crowded classrooms, who are paying much more for their college classes, or who have seen the options for caring for an ill relative diminish, today's forecast is no surprise. Their economic situation has not improved, and so neither has Washington state's.

Through three years of the Great Recession, we've cut \$10 billion in public services. Today's forecast dropped another \$122 million to take the total reduction in the forecast since June to over \$2.2 billion. As legislators, we have a responsibility to balance the budget, and we will. But we also have a responsibility to our neighbors to help our communities recover and thrive.

Working together, we can meet both those responsibilities. We are open to all options, and committed to finding a path forward that the people of Washington will support.

Our state faces a very tough situation. Our constitutional duty is to maintain a balanced budget, however, the only public services still available to cut are those we most value and which we worked hard to protect as we have cut billions of dollars out of the budget during the last three years.

I am committed to devoting my full effort to working with you to resolve the budget situation in a way that stays true to our values. Moreover, I want us

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to offer the best outcomes possible for the families and communities we serve.

As always, if you have questions or concerns, you can contact me via email or through my office. Even in these very challenging times, it is a privilege and an honor to work for you, and I look forward to continuing to work on your behalf. I wish you and your family a Happy Thanksgiving!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.